

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An essentially ceramic target for a sputtering device, especially for magnetically enhanced sputtering, said target comprising predominantly nickel oxide, characterized in that wherein the nickel oxide is oxygen-deficient with respect to the stoichiometric composition.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that wherein the stoichiometric deficiency stems from the composition of the intimate blend formed by nickel oxide powders and nickel powders.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in either of claims 1 and 2, characterized in that claim 1, wherein x is strictly less than 1.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that claim 1, wherein the target has an electrical resistivity of less than 10 ohm.cm, preferably less than 1 ohm.cm, and more preferably less than 0.1 ohm.cm.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that claim 1, wherein the nickel oxide is alloyed to a minority element.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 5, characterized in that wherein the atomic percentage of the minority element is less than 500, preferably less than 30% and even more preferably still less than 200, calculated with respect to the nickel.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in either of claims 5 and 6, characterized in that claim 5, wherein the minority element is a material whose oxide is an electroactive material with anodic coloration.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 7, characterized in that wherein the minority element is chosen selected from the group consisting of Co, Ir, Ru, and Rh, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein or 6, characterized in that the minority element is a material whose oxide is an electroactive material with cathodic coloration.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 9, characterized in that wherein the minority element is chosen selected from the group consisting of Mo, W, Re, Sn, In, and Bi, and or a mixture of these elements.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein or 6, characterized in that the minority element is chosen selected from the elements belonging to the column one of the Periodic Table.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that wherein the minority element is chosen selected from the group consisting of H, Li, K, and Na.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 5, wherein or~~6,~~
~~characterized in that~~ the minority element is a metal or an alkaline earth or a semiconductor,
the hydrated or hydroxylated oxide of which is protonically conductive.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The target as claimed in claim 13, ~~characterized in~~
~~that wherein~~ the minority element is ~~chosen selected from the group consisting of~~ Ta, Zn, Zr,
Al, Si, Sb, U, Be, Mg, Ca, V, and Y, and or a mixture of these elements.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A process for manufacturing a thin layer based on
nickel oxide by magnetically enhanced sputtering, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ it uses a
ceramic target as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 14~~ claim 1.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): An electrochromic material produced by Use of the
process as claimed in claim 15;
wherein said for producing an electrochromic material having has an anodic
coloration as a thin layer based on nickel oxide.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): An electrochemical device comprising at least one
carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one
electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the
 H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ said electrochemically active
layer is based on nickel oxide obtained by the process as claimed in claim 15 and/or from a
the essentially ceramic target as claimed in one of claims 1 to 14.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The electrochemical device comprising at least one carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, characterized in that wherein said electrochemically active layer is based on nickel oxide, said layer being alloyed with a minority element consisting of a material whose oxide is an electroactive material with anodic coloration, especially chosen from ~~Co, Ir, Ru, and Rh or a mixture of these elements~~, said layer being obtained from a target as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The electrochemical device comprising at least one carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, characterized in that wherein said electrochemically active layer is based on nickel oxide, said layer being alloyed with a minority element consisting of a material whose oxide is an electroactive material with anodic coloration, especially chosen from ~~Mo, W, Re, Sn, In, and Bi or a mixture of these elements~~, said layer being obtained from a target as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 9 to 10~~ claim 1.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): The electrochemical device comprising at least one carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, characterized in that wherein said electrochemically active layer is based on nickel oxide, said layer being alloyed with a minority element chosen selected from the elements belonging to the column one of the Periodic Table, especially

~~chosen from H, Li, K, and Na or a mixture of these elements, said layer being obtained from a target as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6 and 11 to 12~~ claim 1.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): The electrochemical device comprising at least one carrier substrate provided with a stack of functional layers, including at least one electrochemically active layer, capable of reversibly and simultaneously inserting ions, of the H^+ , Li^+ or OH^- type, and electrons, characterized in that wherein said electrochemically active layer is a metal or an alkaline earth or a semiconductor, the hydrated or hydroxylated oxide of which is protonically conducted, ~~especially chosen from Ta, Zn, Zr, Al, Si, Sb, U, Be, Mg, Ca, V, and Y or a mixture of these elements, said layer being obtained from a target as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6 and 13 to 14~~ claim 1.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The use of the electrochemical device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 17 to 21~~ claim 17 to form part of electrochromic glazing, especially for buildings or for means of locomotion of the train, airplane or car type, to form part of display screens or to form part of electrochromic mirrors.